

The pivotal and concluding chapter—with regard to the book's subtitle and thesis—is the one titled “Lessons Learned—or Not.” Joes begins by devoting less than three pages to each insurgency wherein he highlights their most salient features. These function well as summaries, but the “useful lessons” are bite-size and hardly original. For example, “[L]ater efforts to imitate [the Maoist victory in 1949] in different environments and time periods should have been successful—and they were.” Or, “The withdrawal of the French from Vietnam ... suggests the reasonable hypothesis that democracies are disinclined, or perhaps unable, to fight a protracted war in circumstances where their interests are not clearly engaged or threatened.” Four succinct and useful pages analyzing the weaknesses and failures of the four insurgencies follow, i.e., the lessons learned. Thus, it is these relatively few pages that I would read first if I wished to use this book to prepare a lecture; the main body of the book has value, but primarily as background.

A few peeves: In writing Chinese names, Joes used the outdated Wade-Giles system of romanization instead of Pinyin in use at least since 1979, which, for example, renders China's troubled northwest province of Xinjiang as Sinkiang, the Qing dynasty as Ch'ing, and Mao Zedong as Mao Tse-tung. The index is thin, as it fails to include any number of names that are mentioned in the narrative even as not all of whom are identified there, e.g., Khrushchev, Grivas, Ben Bella, Manchuria, Fourth Encirclement Campaign, IJA. And there are a few questionable locutions, e.g., interpenetrating and disfavored.

Finally, *Victorious Insurgencies* is best suited for a political science course on insurgencies and how to fight them, but not for a history course, not even one on revolutions, which I have taught. It is also characterized by a tone that perhaps suggests the author might like it to be his ticket to becoming a well-placed policymaker or even, if the gods are smiling, an advisor to a U.S. president.

California State University, San Bernardino

Robert Blackey

Jill Lepore. *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. Pp. 224. Cloth, \$19.95; ISBN 978-0-691-15027-7.

Whether it is via bookstore shelves, television miniseries, or the political protests of the Tea Party movement, references to the Founding Fathers are seemingly everywhere in contemporary American culture. In *The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History*, Jill Lepore, a historian of colonial America and frequent contributor to the *New Yorker*, examines how Americans on both the political right and the left have appropriated the memory of the American Revolution for political gain. As Lepore illustrates through numerous vignettes of well-known figures such as Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Thomas

Paine, her emphasis is on our culture's often deeply flawed collective memory rather than the discipline of history. For Lepore, much of the abuse of historical memory lies with the modern Tea Party movement, an organization she followed extensively in the Boston area in 2009 and 2010. The result is a political culture that increasingly argues, if not assumes, that our nation's founding generation rebelled against the British in order to establish a Christian nation filled with white Europeans and wholly committed to cultural conservatism, low taxes, and an unregulated system of free enterprise. This culture, according to Lepore, is not just historically inaccurate; it is actually "anti-history" in that it suggests a seamless connection between the infallible heroes of the late eighteenth century and the complexity of our modern age.

While Lepore finds much to celebrate in the Founding Fathers, she also provides, in contrast, evidence that suggests a revolutionary period filled with racism, the protection of slavery, gender inequality, ignorance, and a society either unable or unwilling to protect its most vulnerable citizens. The other side of the period's historical coin includes individuals such as slave poet Phyllis Wheatley and Peter Franklin Mecom, a relative of Benjamin Franklin, who spent his last years mentally ill and "tied up in a barn, like an animal." Others found themselves in debtors' prison or facing the likelihood of either dying in childbirth or at least burying many children. For Lepore, the point is not to trivialize the Founding Fathers but rather to question the wisdom of imposing the period and its countless myths as a sacred blueprint for debating the role of government and citizenship in the twenty-first century.

Lepore's interest in the complexity of race, class, gender, and religious pluralism during the American Revolution highlights her contention that much of the modern "historical fundamentalism" stems from the rise of the new social history in the seventies and the clash between the enduring myths surrounding 1776 and an evolving discipline of history during the Bicentennial in 1976. The often controversial Bicentennial commissions under Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Gerald Ford underscored the growing tension between a populist embrace of an older grand narrative of the Revolution and historians who were increasingly committed to exploring a multiracial past that included women, ethnic and religious diversity, racial and economic injustice, and conflict, not to mention healthy revision and challenges to popular assumptions of American exceptionalism. For both teachers and students, Lepore's meditation serves as a valuable reminder that the craft of history is inevitably a political act in which we navigate both the realities and, according to Lepore, the "tyranny of the past."

Illinois State University

Richard L. Hughes